

Before the 20th century, Chinese composers had difficulty studying abroad.

The Chinese composer Xian Xinghai finished their training abroad.

It was rare for Chinese and European composers to hear their songs.

Three major instruments he played were piano, clarinet and violin.

To study music, he moved to Beijing, Shanghai and Paris.

He wrote political songs including patriotic works as a part of the anti-Japanese war effort.

He was the **first** to go abroad to study.

He joined the communist party.

Due to the war, Xian was unable to return to China.

He titled his symphonies "Holy War" and "National Liberation" which reflected upon the events that took place.

He composed choral, chamber and opera music.

He died in Moscow.

There is a museum dedicated to Xian Xinghai in Guangzhou.

Xian Xinghai received the award of "Musician of the People".

Yellow River symbolizes the spirit of the nation.

The melody for song of the Yellow River consisted of Chinese instruments and aspects of European music which contributed to its popularity. Conscious blend of Chinese and Western traditions.

The song promoted a sense of national identity, which led to politicians favoring it.

Originally notated differently than a normal score, changed it to the usual 5-stave form so it could be played internationally.

After 30 years, it was changed from a **cantata** to a **piano concerto** during the Chinese Revolution (1966-76)

The piano was seen as a bourgeois (rich people) instrument, but the songs had Chinese music so they were able to perform it.

Helped to promote the piano in China.

Mao's wife was interested in the music so they were able to perform it.

Many members of the Philharmonic worked to change it.

Yin Chenzhong Wrote the new concerto, the instrumental revisions were made by Chu Wanghua and Sheng Lihong.

Thanks to the patronage of Mao's wife, the Yellow River concerto was finally recognized as a collective work in 1969.

The first performance of the Yellow River Concerto was in Beijing in 1970.

Yellow River is now the best known of all Chinese compositions in the west, for years it was the only orchestral work permitted to be played in China. Yin Chen Zhong did much to promote the music in the west.

The first performance of the Yellow River outside of China was in Saratoga Springs, New York on the 25th of August, 1973.

The first performance of the concerto in the west led to a discussion of whether melodies from the "East is Red" (National anthem during the cultural revolution) should be retained from being woven into the score. In the end, the decision was made to perform the original composition to keep history and tradition.

Yin Chenzhong and his team of arrangers turned the 8 part cantata into a 4 movement concerto.

Each movement has a different thematic motif that creates the ambience/atmosphere of the music. The opening depicts the strengths and power of the river and the boat man's struggle with the force of nature. The Ode to the Yellow River (originally cantata sung by tenor soloist) calm and contemplative in tone. The lyrics relate to the history of Chinese people living along the yellow river. Third movement, "The Wrath of the Yellow River", is dominated by the Chinese flute accompanied by piano to embellish the song. Final movement, has a thrilling and war-like conclusion the Chinese National anthem was incorporated into the song. The concerto is expressive and dramatic, giving ways to moments of inner-contemplation. The piano part is dense and brilliant!- Virtuoso

Influenced by Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff .

The Western critics have not been very nice about the piece. It is important to know the context and history of the piece to appreciate it.

The piece is important because it is the blending of two musical cultures.